

YOUNG ATHLETE: WHAT IS PROHIBITED CONDUCT?

This resource provides references to and examples of Prohibited Conduct as addressed in Section 4: Prohibited Conduct in the [BA Child Safeguarding Policy](#) and the [Member Protection Policy](#).

Prohibited Conduct in basketball.

Prohibited conduct is the term used to describe any type of behaviour toward or involving a child or young person under the age of 18 that can be harmful, abusive or against the law.

Prohibited conduct is unacceptable in basketball.

Prohibited Conduct can occur:

- During basketball- training, games or tournaments
- Traveling with basketball – camps, interstate tournaments, in the hotel, plane, car or bus
- Between two or more people in sport
- - coaches, other athletes, managers, officials, family members
- From the sidelines
- Online
- Once, or multiple times.

Prohibited Conduct includes:

- Any form of Child Abuse – physical, emotional/psychological, sexual, neglect and exposure to family violence
- Grooming
- Bullying
- Discrimination
- Harassment
- Victimisation
- Vilification
- Other harmful behaviour
- Keeping or requesting a child to keep secrets
- Supplying alcohol
- Supplying medicine without prescription or consent

For a full definition of each type of prohibited conduct, see Definitions on pages 9-13 of the [BA Child Safeguarding Policy](#)



Different types of abuse explained.

Physical Abuse Physical abuse

Any action that uses physical force that hurts a child or young person.

This includes hitting, beating, kicking, shaking, or making you do excessive training or drills that are likely to cause physical pain or discomfort.

It can also over-training or using physical punishment at training to the point of exhaustion, vomiting or passing out.

E.g. After a loss, the assistant coach calls the team in for a 6am session and makes them run laps until they vomit.

Sexual abuse

Any behaviour that is sexual, or that makes a child or young person feel uncomfortable, threatened or scared, or is illegal.

This includes physical touch that is sexual, talking about sexual and private things in person or online or showing someone videos or photos that are sexual or private.

E.g. A senior player in the team takes a photo of Kayla while she is showering in the changeroom and uses it to force Kayla to send more nudes and other intimate material, saying 'if you don't, I will post it on snapchat'.

Grooming

Any behaviour when an adult or someone older than you acts in a way that singles you out, usually in an attempt to eventually commit sexual abuse. It may feel like it is normal and might not even make you uncomfortable in the beginning.

Examples of behaviour that may be grooming include someone asking you overly personal questions, offering you gifts or special treatment, contacting you directly on socials, offering lifts when it is not really needed, breaking or bending rules, or taking photos of you on their personal phone

E.g. Cal often feels excluded by their teammates from social events and group chats. The manager notices, so invites Cal to hang out with him after training, connects with them on snapchat and takes Cal shopping to buy new sneakers. The manager tells Cal 'To just keep it between them so it doesn't create drama with the others'



Emotional /psychological abuse

The use of words or acts that can make you feel bad, sad, embarrassed, left out, worried, confused, anxious or threatened.

It can include verbal abuse such as shouting, belittling or mocking. It can also include behaviours that make you feel rejected, alone, scared, ignored.

E.g. Penny missed the shot in the final seconds of the game, resulting in a loss. A parent of Penny's teammate pulls Penny aside at the end of the game and says 'that loss was on you, you should never have been playing today, I can't believe you even made the team. Let's just say that I won't forget this'.

The same parent hosts an end of season party but makes a point of not inviting Penny. They also remove Penny and her mum from the team group chat.

Neglect

When an adult doesn't provide a child or young person with basic needs such as food, water, shelter, appropriate clothing, supervision, access to education and health services.

E.g. Min has a sprained ankle that requires significant taping for her to walk on it. Her parents and the physio have pushed Min to continue to play, despite her telling them about the level of pain she is experiencing. The team are in a 3-day tournament and if Min doesn't play it will impact their chances to make it through to the final. Min suggested she have it x-rayed but her parents refused, saying 'no, let's go to the doctor when the tournament is over'.

Exposure to family violence

When there is violence in the home you are living in (including physical violence as well as yelling, threatening and controlling behaviour), even if it is between other people and not directed at you.

E.g. Tyler's parents are separated after years of violence. Tyler's dad comes to his games and sits near his mum. Tyler knows she feels really unsafe and is fearful of what his dad might do, but she wants to support Tyler so keeps coming to the games. Tyler can't concentrate when his dad is at the courts.



Harmful Behaviour is:

Bullying

When a person or group of people repeatedly and intentionally using words or actions to cause distress and/or fear - in-person or online.

E.g. Over the last 6 months Jake continues to exclude his teammate Brett from activities, intentionally giving Jake incorrect details about changes in training times so he is late and has consistently made comments about Brett's weight on the team group chat.

Discrimination

- **Direct discrimination** occurs where, a person is treated worse than another person because of certain characteristics (e.g. their gender, race, cultural background, sexuality, disability etc).

E.g. David's brother is autistic and while he was watching David's game he was asked to leave because his stimming and outbursts made another spectator uncomfortable.

- **Indirect discrimination** occurs where a rule or expectation that applies to everyone is unfair for a person with certain characteristics (e.g. their gender, race, cultural background, sexuality, disability etc).

E.g. The regional rep team have just provided uniforms for the team and Gina, who is Muslim was told she is not allowed to wear a long sleeve shirt underneath to cover her arms because it won't match the other team members.

Harassment means any type of behaviour that is offensive, abusive, belittling or threatening and is likely to cause harm – in-person or online.

E.g. Harriet's team lost the grand final to Jenna's team, and Harriet's mother has been leaving offensive comments about Jenna on her club's Facebook page.

Victimisation means threatening to cause harm or causing harm to a person because they reported prohibited conduct, made a complaint or supported someone else who did this.

E.g. Oscar told his dad that his coach Mark had been sending him text messages late at night and had started asking about his weekend plans. He said it was weird and kind of annoying.

Oscar's dad told the club, and the club gave Mark a warning and a firm reminder about appropriate contact with young athletes.

The following week, Mark selected a team to take away to an interstate tournament. Despite Oscar having the second highest playing stats of the team, he was not selected, and Mark did not provide any reason why.

Vilification means an act or behaviour, either in-person or online, that spreads hatred or ridicule of, a person or group of people because of certain characteristics.

E.g. A committee member of a club starts an online petition calling to remove the Aboriginal flag from the stadium and stop doing the acknowledgement of country at the committee meetings.

Other Harmful Behaviour

Any other behaviour that might cause harm to you including:

- Harmful training methods including physical punishment or overtraining.
- Forcing you to train or compete when ill or injured or restrict food or water intake.
- Excessive focus on weight, appearance and eating beyond what is necessary for nutrition requirements in high performance sport.
- Using physical punishment or any form of treatment that feels cruel, frightening or humiliating.
- Making sexual comments or telling sexual jokes.
- Taking inappropriate photos or footage of you and/or sharing photos of you online without you or your parent's permission.
- Any physical touch that is sexual or causes pain or distress.

IT IS ALSO CONSIDERED PROHIBITED CONDUCT IF SOMEONE DOES NOT FOLLOW THE BA SAFE PRACTICES

How will I know if it is prohibited conduct?

INDICATORS FROM YOUNG ATHLETES

Behavioural Indicators

- Showing wariness or distrust of adults
- Demonstrating fear of parents and of going home; running away or hiding
- Reluctance to be left alone with a particular person
- Overly friendly with, or protective of a particular person
- Being very passive and compliant
- Poor understanding of boundaries or personal space
- Adult language used in play
- Unexplained absences
- Low self esteem
- Symptoms of anxiety or depression
- Lashing out or aggressive behaviour

Physical Indicators

- Bruises, fractures, burns, sprains, dislocations, bites, cuts
- Pressure marks from fingers
- Injuries that do not match the explanation
- Signs of internal injury e.g. visual problems, dizziness, abdominal pain, shortness of breath
- Wearing long sleeved clothes on hot days (to hide bruising or other injury)
- Pain in genitals or sexually transmitted diseases
- Frequent hunger or malnutrition
- Poor hygiene
- Left unsupervised / continually late to be picked up
- Medical needs not attended to

INDICATORS FROM ADULTS IN BASKETBALL

Behavioural Indicators

- Avoiding confrontation or questions about behaviour
- Defensiveness when challenged or questioned about behaviour
- Comfortable breaking the rules or pushing boundaries
- Rough and unsolicited contact (wrestling, sparring)
- Using explicit language regularly in presence of young athletes
- Shaming, threatening, dominating or overbearing
- Excessive interrupting or dismissing young athletes' views
- Body shaming or commenting on a young athlete's body.
- Gaslighting – making someone second guess what they think they observed
- Inability to regulate emotions – positive or negative

Indicators of Grooming

- Spending 1:1 time with one young athlete
- Giving gifts to a child
- Showing special favours to one young athlete but not others, like paying for new equipment
- Contacting a young athlete outside of their role
- Telling sexual jokes or making sexual references
- Offering to babysit a young athlete
- Asking parents personal questions about the child
- Having photos of a young athlete on their phone or social media profile
- Hugging or excessive physical contact with a young athlete
- Being in the changeroom at the same time as the young athlete

These may be indicators that someone is experiencing harmful behaviours or prohibited conduct in basketball, or outside of basketball, like at home, at school or somewhere else in the community.

Raising concerns about prohibited conduct

REMEMBER: if you are concerned about another young athlete, you can:

- **Check in**
- **Listen in**
- **Step in**

Check out the Responding to concerns resource.

1. CHECK IN:

Regardless of where it might be happening, the first thing you should do is CHECK IN with that person and see if they are ok or if there is anything you can do to help.

Call 000 if immediate risk to safety

2. LISTEN IN:

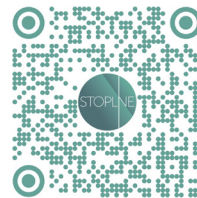
- Provide a safe and confidential space
- Reassure them they are doing the right thing
- Don't make promises especially promises to keep secrets
- Just listen, avoid questions all together, especially those that can be leading
- Remind them it's not their fault and that you will take it seriously

3. STEP IN:

If you have information that a child or young person has been harmed, or is at risk of harm or abuse, you are required to step in.

There are several ways you can do this:

- Raise it internally at your club or association – a Child Safeguarding Officer or Member Protection Officer, a committee member or your president.
- Contact your state/territory association.
- Contact Basketball Australia
- Report to Basketball Australia Integrity Unit via email integrity@australia.basketball
- Report via STOpline, Basketball Australia's independent reporting hotline which at the discretion of the reporter may be made anonymously:



Scan the QR code for more information or to make a report.

